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**Testimony to the Environment Committee**

**March 7, 2011**

**RE: HB-5518, *An Act Establishing a Statewide Water Use Plan***

**The Connecticut Water Company** joins with the Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) in **supporting the goals of HB-5518, *An Act Establishing a Statewide Water Use Plan***. It has been clear to water utilities, the environmental community, regulators and legislators for some time that there are benefits to a statewide water use plan to guide decisions about water allocation and management in Connecticut.

Responsibility for the allocation and management of the state's water resources currently falls under the jurisdiction of four state agencies – the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Utility Control and the Office of Policy and Management – each with separate legislative mandates and authorities. As such, each agency implements their respective regulatory programs but there is no comprehensive plan or integrated approach to managing water resources in Connecticut.

There have been multiple legislative initiatives and studies over the years that recommended the development of a statewide plan and comprehensive water allocation policies. The Water Planning Council was established to provide better coordination among the agencies in water policy and planning. While there have been some important steps taken to date, a true state wide water use plan has not been developed and there are many opportunities for greater coordination.

The need for such a state water resources plan has never been more evident than as the process unfolded to develop streamflow regulations. A statewide water use plan would guide that process and ensure that critical water management decisions are based on objective data, science and knowledge. It would drive more informed and balanced policies and regulations to meet the environmental, public health, safety and economic development needs of the state.

We are optimistic that with the new Commissioners and organizational structure recommended by Governor Malloy there may be opportunities to advance these important efforts, with or without this legislation. We look forward to working with the various stakeholders and particularly Rep. Mushinsky, who has long been a proponent of sound water resource planning, to develop the appropriate water resource management plans and policies that will provide the basis for current and future decisions in Connecticut.

**About Connecticut Water Company**

Connecticut Water Company serves nearly 90,000 customers or more than 225,000 people in 55 towns in Connecticut. We have 200 employees dedicated to providing our customers and the communities we serve with quality water and service. We have 18 surface water supplies and 214 groundwater sources that serve our customers. We have a long history of regulatory compliance and stand ready to work with stakeholders to ensure the appropriate laws and regulations are in place to provide for public health, safety and service to our customers.

*For additional information or questions on our testimony please contact:  
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